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Message Text

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15
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02

ACDA-10 MC-02 PM-04 /073 W
---------- 012704
R 141832Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1752
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

UNCLAS LONDON 07565

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, ETRN, UK, VE
SUBJECT: AIRSHIP DEAL WITH VENEZUELAN COMPANY

REF: CARACAS 4847

1. DESPITE INABILITY EMBASSY CARACAS SUBSTANTIATE AIR-SHIP DEAL BETWEEN AEROSPACE DEVELOPMENTS/MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORT ANALYSIS OF UK AND AEROVISION OF VENEZUELA, THERE IS EVIDENCE HERE THAT A CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED AND THAT WORK IS PROGRESSING. CREDIT SOURCE HAS CON-FIRMED THAT AEROSPACE DEVELOPMENTS WAS FORMED IN 1971, IS ENGAGED IN AIRSHIP DESIGN AND IS CONSIDERED TRUST-WORTHY FOR NORMAL ENGAGEMENTS. UK CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY HAS VERIFIED THAT COMPANY HAS APPLIED FOR CERTIFICATE OF AIRWORTHINESS FOR NEWLY-DESIGNED AIRSHIP. IN APPLYING FOR C OF A, COMPANY INFORMED CAA OFFICIAL THAT AIRSHIP WAS BEING BUILT UNDER CONTRACT FOR VENEZUELAN FIRM. IN ADDITION, REPUTABLE TRADE JOURNAL, FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, HAS CARRIED REPORT ON COMPANY AND ITS VENEZUELAN DEAL. THE REPORT CONTAINS FAIR AMOUNT OF ENGINEERING DETAIL AND HAS GENERAL RING OF TRUTH TO IT. (WE ARE SENDING REPORT TO ADDRESSEES UNDER COVER OF AIRGRAM.)

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2. WE SPOKE TO JOHN WOOD, ONE OF THE PARTNERS IN THE

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PROJECT. HE CLAIMED FIRM CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED FOR DELIVERY OF FIRST AIRSHIP TO AEROVISION IN 1977. FIRST SHIP WILL BE EQUIPPED FOR AERIAL ADVERTISING, PRIMARILY NIGHT TIME DISPLAY, AND WHEN NOT SO EMPLOYED WILL BE USED TO TEST MARKET POTENTIAL FOR AIRSHIP AS FORM OF TRANSPORT IN VENEZUELAN HINTERLAND. WOOD SAID HIS COMPANY HAS SECOND "CONTRACT" WITH AEROVISION FOR FURTHER 21 AIRSHIPS TO BE DELIVERED OVER 10-YEAR PERIOD. DETAILS OF FOLLOW-ON CRAFT OF SECOND ORDER HAVE NOT BEEN SPECIFIED, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR AEROVISION MAY HAVE SIGNED AN OPTION TO BUY DESPITE WOOD'S INSISTENCE THAT IT IS A "FIRM CONTRACT."

3. WOOD SAID AEROVISION IS NEW COMPANY IN ADVERTISING FIELD WHICH HAS BEEN SET-UP BY A JULIO OMANA OF FINANCIERA UNION (TELEX 23167) IN CARACAS.

ARMSTRONG

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